

Pat's Favorite Recipes



Jordan Bush

is a commercial photographer. His work has allowed him to discover and document cultures and food across five continents. A graduate of Garden Spot High School and Millersville University, Jordan and his fiancée, Jessica, reside and cook together in Ephrata.

I'm sure you have one of those metal recipe boxes or well-used cookbooks that belonged to your mother or grandmother stashed away somewhere. I'd encourage you to take a second look at what I discovered are unexpected heirlooms that share the language of love through food and serve up some family history.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY JORDAN BUSH

Grandma's Cooking

Holiday meals were established traditions at my grandma and grandpa's house, and her cooking was legendary. She cooked grand smorgasbords made from scratch, using the Pennsylvania Dutch holy trinity of ingredients: heaps of butter, sugar and salt. Every holiday she'd set the bar high, even for herself. Once at a great aunt's house for dinner, my little sister's disappointment in a single dessert was manifested with, "Where's the rest?" Thanks to Grandma, it was expected that there'd be a pie, a cake, ice cream and cracker pudding after a meal so hearty that it could warm a snowman.

Growing up, I assumed everyone's maternal and paternal grandparents were each other's best friends. Mine were, and on Saturday mornings, the five of us would stop at a diner on the way to the flea market in Middletown, otherwise known as "The Big M." Those are the earliest memories I have of diner food, which to this day remains a personal favorite.

When I moved to Louisiana in 2010, I asked my grandma to provide me with recipes for some of my favorite dishes. She would also ship me Tastykake Butterscotch Krimpets, a treat I remember having at sleepovers at her and Grandpa's house in Mount Joy, while watching *Wheel of Fortune* and listening to the sounds of the Amtrak train and the ticking of the googly-eyed cat clock at night.

As an adult, I spent many late nights talking about food with Grandma over the phone. She was also a night owl and often the line was busy with her endless socializing, so I'd call at 11 p.m., when all else was quiet. She'd answer by the second ring, knowing it was me. Throughout her life, she taught me to be curious, to understand the virtues of learning everything I could and to develop as many life skills as possible.

My grandma's recipe notebooks, cherry rolling pin and mixing bowl – displayed on her old dining table – are now heirlooms with decades of use and love attached to them.

Patricia Yvonne Mummaw

Like so many of us, Grandma could also be complicated, and she kept her business to herself. She was stubborn and selfless to a fault, but the combination could lend itself to unthinkable examples of kindness. Once while shopping in a department store, a stranger complimented her on her earrings. On the spot, Grandma removed them and insisted she take them.

A few years ago, I remember canning quick pickles with her. It was notable for a few reasons; for starters, she presented me with a ladle. It was given to her by my great-grandmother, her ex-mother-in-law from her first marriage. It must be close to 60 years old and, for a woman who gave everything away, earrings to a stranger notwithstanding, for some reason she held onto that ladle. Apparently, there were skeletons in the closet; I'm reminded of that whenever we make homemade soup or Grandma's chili. Her mixing bowls and cherry rolling pin live in our cupboards, with the steel worn thin from decades of use. Her heart lives on in ours.

That day, while waiting for the canner to boil, she pointed out the window and asked, "Is that Metzler Road?" I informed her that it was. "I was born on a farm on Metzler Road. I used to ride bicycle to the cottages on Turtle Hill, selling green beans and strawberries to tourists in the summer. Yeah," she said, with a firm nod and pursed lower lip. I thought that side of our family came entirely from Greenbank and New Holland, so that came as quite a surprise.

Her Final Days

In March of 2020, she told us she had pneumonia and the flu, and informed us that she "daren't be near anyone." She lost interest in food and coughed laboriously for months. She was fiercely independent and downright secretive, on this occasion in particular.

Weeks went by until one afternoon she showed up unannounced. Her mother's market basket was filled not with baked goods but with computer hard drives. (A bit of backstory, I kept a backup of my life's photography work at her house, stored in a fireproof safe hidden in her disconnected dishwasher, a modern convenience she deemed inefficient and gratuitous.)

Standing 10 feet away, unable to hug her, I knew what that meant. On a follow-

A patchwork of recipes and prayers given, clipped, taped and written out in cursive, span decades of collecting and use in Grandma's kitchen. Many recipes were amended with notes and revisions to improve them.

up visit to the doctor for her "respiratory illness," they discovered cancer elsewhere in her body. Since food no longer tasted the same, she was rapidly losing weight. Exhausted and stubborn, she accepted this would be her fate.

In October of 2020, we shared one final phone call, eight-minutes short. I knew it would be our last. She was in a nursing home with extensive visitation restrictions due to COVID-19, so the phone was the best way to connect with her. Tired, she answered from a cordless phone with a weak battery. I prayed she and the phone would hold on just a minute longer. She asked me to pray that Jesus would accept her into heaven and take her soon. There was not a doubt in my mind that both were quickly approaching.

She passed away on Veteran's Day 2020, a date that holds special meaning for me. My late grandfather was a veteran of the U.S. Navy, having served from 1942-1962. He passed in 2003, and researching his Navy history was how I dealt with my grandma's failing health. With the help of a reunion website for the USS Kenneth D. Bailey DDR-713, I made contact with one of his shipmates, Chief Ernie Pina. I mentioned him to Grandma when she was still at home and she brought out letters that Ernie had sent to my grandpa years ago. Ernie lives in Massachusetts, and I hope to visit him this

year. Maybe then I'll be able to tell him that Grandma is gone.

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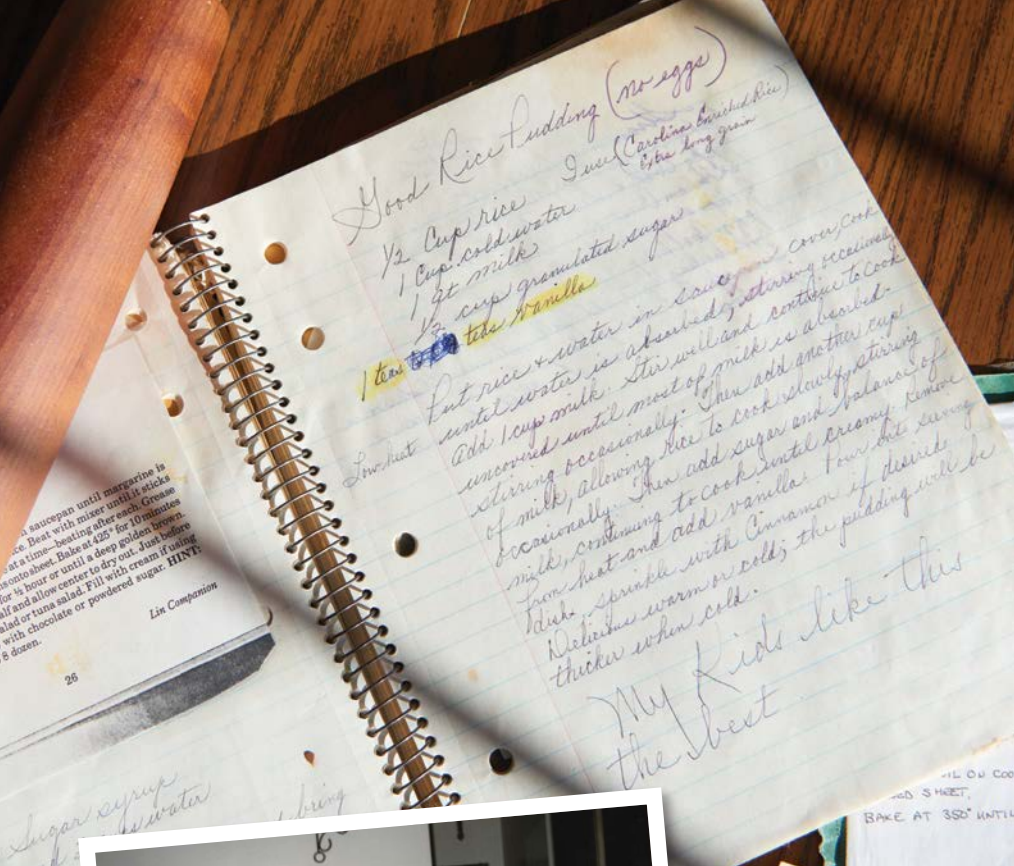
Before Christmas of 2020, my Aunt Cindy gifted me with Grandma's recipe notebooks. The two spiral-bound notebooks were filled with a patchwork of clippings of recipes and prayers that were taped, paper-clipped and written by hand with pen in her recognizable cursive. I couldn't bring myself to look through them until this past Thanksgiving, after a friend shared her mother's turkey stuffing recipe on a beautifully patinated notecard she had found in one of those aforementioned recipe boxes.

Grandma's oldest notebook tells a story. Faded and yellowed, the pages are dusted with what feels like baking flour and dotted with drops of cooking oil and the occasional coffee stain. Pages in the dessert section are stuck together with red Jello. Referenced on her kitchen counter for decades, she revised recipes with different colored pens, scratching out items, adding to an oven duration here, maybe reducing the number of eggs needed there. Later, her amendments evolved to implement white-out and highlighters. A patchwork of recipe clippings from magazines, newspapers

and food packaging is taped and paper-clipped to the lined pages of her notebook. Curiously, her notes are written in the first person, as though she recorded them with us in mind.

Paging through each journal, her mix of recipes feels both familiar and new. I remember her pecan crescent cookies, but not her Scottish shortbread and hermits (a cross between biscotti and gingerbread). Then there are baking suggestions which, being a baker with more luck than experience, stand out. A "Secret Baking Tip" suggests coating berries and fruit with flour to keep them from settling to the bottom of muffins. Another clipping mentions cooking rice in broth, stock or bouillon rather than water. That tip I already practice, but it adds another twist, cooking rice in fruit juice for "use with pork, poultry and desserts."

Another layer of discovery comes in the form of her cited sources, some known, others unfamiliar. A recipe for baked macaroni-and-cheese mentions my cousin: "Jodi's recipe from Grandma Stirk." A recipe for Colorado Peach Cream Pie from *Farm Woman News* that's older than I am, mentions someone I never heard of: "Miriam S. gave this recipe." I got a laugh with a hand-written note atop one page, giving an obvious yet often overlooked reminder for hasty starters: "Read before making."



... sauceron until margarine is... Beat with mixer until it sticks... Bake at 425° for 10 minutes... until a deep golden brown... and allow center to dry out. Beat... with chocolate or powdered sugar. HINT: 8 dozen.

Live Companion

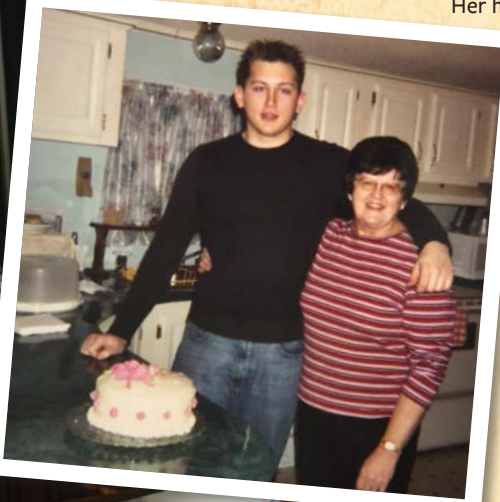


Clockwise from top:
Rice pudding and cracker pudding are favorite desserts in my extended family. Numerous recipes for each have been taste-tested over the years.

At Grandma's home in Gordonville, likely celebrating her birthday in the early 2000s.

An unfamiliar recipe for hermits (similar to biscotti and gingerbread) was found while looking over Grandma's notebooks.

As I was their first-born grandchild, no more than a few days ever passed without seeing my grandma and grandpa, Pat and Wayne "Moe" Mummaw. December 1985.





BUSH'S Since 1908. Quality beans from our family to yours.
TEXAS CHILI
 (A SERVING)
 1 pound lean flap round steak, cut into thin strips
 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
 1½ cup (1 can Bush's Pinto Beans)
 1 (14.5 oz.) can diced tomatoes
 1 (16 oz.) can tomato paste
 In a large pan, cook meat in oil until browned on all sides; drain. Add remaining ingredients; stir to combine. Bring to a boil, cover, reduce heat and cook for 30 to 45 minutes or until meat is tender.
 ½ cup chopped onion
 ½ cup chopped green pepper
 1 tablespoon ground red pepper
 1 tablespoon chili powder
 ½ teaspoon salt
 ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

I use Hamburger Start out with ¼ teas. Cayenne pepper then add more to your liking.



Grandma served many dishes in Fire-King peach-lustre brosilicate-glass bowls, including an amended chili recipe. She preferred pinto beans and extra cayenne pepper for herself. Here, I made it with ground turkey.

Yours truly photographed by my grandma in her Mount Joy kitchen in 1989.

written throughout journals. A *Morning Grace, Grace Before Meals*, there's a familiar amount of care and nervousness in getting them just right. These pages represent the grandmother I loved.

Let Food Be Your Language of Love

Only since my grandma's passing have I realized my passion for sharing food stems from her expression of care and love through food. She couldn't sit still and was always on the go, looking for tasty food throughout Lancaster County. Baked goods from Country Table in Mount Joy or Bird-in-Hand Bake Shop stand out among countless others. Sharing these treasures was one way she expressed love.

Donuts constituted what was arguably her favorite food group, and I don't know how this is possible, but she had never had a Weiser's donut before I offered her one. Returning in kind - offering her food to enjoy - was practically impossible, a gratuity to deny herself out of guilt. She would never let me

make anything for her unless I said it was for me, so I learned to take one for the team. For a time she borrowed a small cast iron skillet that got her cooking a little more for herself. And, those late phone calls talking about how to make anything from chili to getting the junket to set, those meant the world to me.

February

Patricia Yvonne Mummaw was born on February 6, 1939. She was the mother of three children and two more she'd meet in heaven. She was the grandma of three grandchildren, had two great-grandsons, and was known as "Aunt Pat" to many more. This February, I ask that you take a Saturday morning to make a family recipe with someone you love. Even though written recipes often lack fine details and personal touches, I promise you'll both remember the occasion. Or, if you find yourself in need of an outing, treat yourself and a loved one to breakfast at a local diner. Just make sure to add extra sugar to the coffee.

